

Pacific Salmon ID – Marine Phase

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Chinook (king)

- Mouth is dark with a black gum line
- Large, sharp teeth
- Spots on both lobes of tail
- Large spots on back



Coho (silver)

- Mouth is light with a white gum line
- Medium size, sharp teeth
- Spots only on upper lobe of tail
- Spots on back
- Wide caudal peduncle



Pink (humpy)

- Mouth is white with a black gum line.
- In marine areas, almost no teeth
- Large oval spots on both lobes of tail
- Large black spots on back
- Pointed lower jaw
- No silver on tail
- Very small scales



Chum (dog)

- Mouth is white with a white gum line
- Well developed teeth
- No spots on tail or back
- Calico markings (vertical bars) – faint on bright fish
- Narrow caudal peduncle
- White tip on anal fin



Sockeye (red)

- Mouth is white with a white gum line
- Almost toothless
- No spots on tail or back
- Large, bright gold, glassy eye



Chinook

Jaw – The chinook has a dark mouth and black gums at the base of its teeth. Immature chinook are known as a “blackmouth”

Tail – Both the upper and lower lobes of the tail are covered with spots and silver is prominent.



Coho

Jaw - The mouth is white and the gum line is almost white, but the tongue may be black. The teeth are sharp and strong.

Tail – The coho tail has just a few scattered spots, usually on the upper lobe, with silver streaks. It has a wide caudal peduncle.



Pink

Jaw – The mouth of a pink is white, but the gums and tongue are black, as they are in a chinook. It does not have “teeth” on its tongue.

Tail – The pink salmon tail is covered with large oval spots. It does not have silver on the tail. The scales are very small compared to other salmon of the same size.



Chum

Jaw – The mouth is white and the gum line is white, but the tongue may be black. The lips are fleshy with well developed teeth in both jaws, but there are no teeth on the base of the tongue.

Tail – The tail has no spots, but does have silver streaks covering about half of the fin. The caudal peduncle is narrow.



Sockeye

Jaw – The mouth is white and the gum line is white. The lips are fleshy. The teeth are small and well developed in both jaws. There are no teeth on the base of the tongue.

Tail – There are no spots on the tail.

